

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, WASH. D.C. 20520

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☐ In Full

☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to

Date ☐ Declassify on ☐ Reason

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

March 28, 1977

Dear Senator Kennedy:

The Secretary has asked me to reply to your letter of February 28 concerning our response to the human rights situation in Argentina and to thank you for your support of the steps taken by the Secretary with regard to reducing our 1978 military sales credits request for Argentina. As you know, Argentina has informed us that it will not use any Fiscal Year 1978 Foreign Military Sales (FMS) financing.

In your letter you recommend that we withhold \$48 million in Fiscal Year 1977 military credits already authorized by Congress for Argentina. You also express the hope that commercial arms sales will not spurt as a result of military credit reductions.

We have deferred negotiation of the 1977 FMS financing agreement, which amounts to \$36 million - down from the originally proposed \$48 million. We do not know what commercial arms purchases are contemplated by Argentina. In deciding on export licenses for such items, we will take into account the human rights situation prevalent at the time.

With respect to your suggestion that the current parole program be extended to include Argentine nationals in Argentina, this is a step which we have explored with our Embassy in Buenos Aires. It requires Argentine government approval, of course, and it seems unlikely such approval would be forthcoming.

Another possibility would be to assist Argentine refugees outside Argentina. Their number would rise if the Argentine government reinstates the Constitutional right for persons detained under the state of siege.

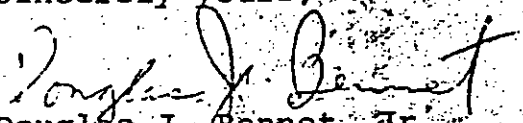
The Honorable  
Edward M. Kennedy,  
United States Senate.

800177  
Box 4855

provisions to opt to leave the country. We understand that this question is currently under review by the Argentine government.

We will remain alert to opportunities to assist Argentine nationals but cannot be more specific at this point.

Sincerely yours,

  
Douglas J. Bennet, Jr.  
Assistant Secretary  
for Congressional Relations

Enclosure:

Correspondence Returned.